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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 000866

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TU](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: GREEK CYPRIOT PARTY LEADER ANASTASSIADES MEETS
TURKISH PM ERDOGAN IN ISTANBUL

REF: ANKARA 799

(U) Classified by Political Counselor John Kunstadter, E.O.
12958, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: Two days after meeting with Turkish FM Gul (reftel) Greek Cypriot Democratic Rally Party (DISY) leader Nicos Anastassiades met for about an hour with PM Erdogan in Istanbul February 12. Anastassiades again raised possible changes to the Annan Plan, although with more specificity than during the Gul meeting. On the Turkish side, the meetings appear to have yielded no concrete progress toward settlement, but are remarkable for the fact they happened at all. End Summary.

2. (C) AK Party International Relations head Saban Disli, who was present at the Erdogan meeting, said Erdogan and Anastassiades spoke for about an hour. As he had with Gul, Anastassiades raised changes in the Annan Plan, but this time with more specificity: complete withdrawal of Turkish troops upon Turkey becoming a full EU member; modifications to the Plan's property settlement provisions; the possible exchange of Turkish Cypriot territory in the Karpass for Greek Cypriot territory. Anastassiades also raised missing persons issues.

3. (C) Erdogan reiterated Turkey's commitment to a solution, adding that failure to resolve Cyprus soon will lead to bigger problems in the long run. He told Anastassiades Turkey will support any Greek Cypriot initiative with Talat. Anastassiades said he is committed to a bizonal, bicomunal solution. Erdogan promised to keep the door open to further contact with DISY.

4. (C) Disli attached little significance to the specific discussions in the two meetings but again praised Anastassiades' courage in making the trip, which Disli views as a confidence-building measure. He called Anastassiades "reasonable." Disli, who arranged the Erdogan and Gul meetings, told Anastassiades after the Erdogan meeting that such talks can continue but linked concrete progress to measures to help ease Turkish Cypriot isolation. Absent such measures, Disli told us, Erdogan and AK are vulnerable to criticism from the right-wing nationalist National Action Party (MHP).
EDELMAN